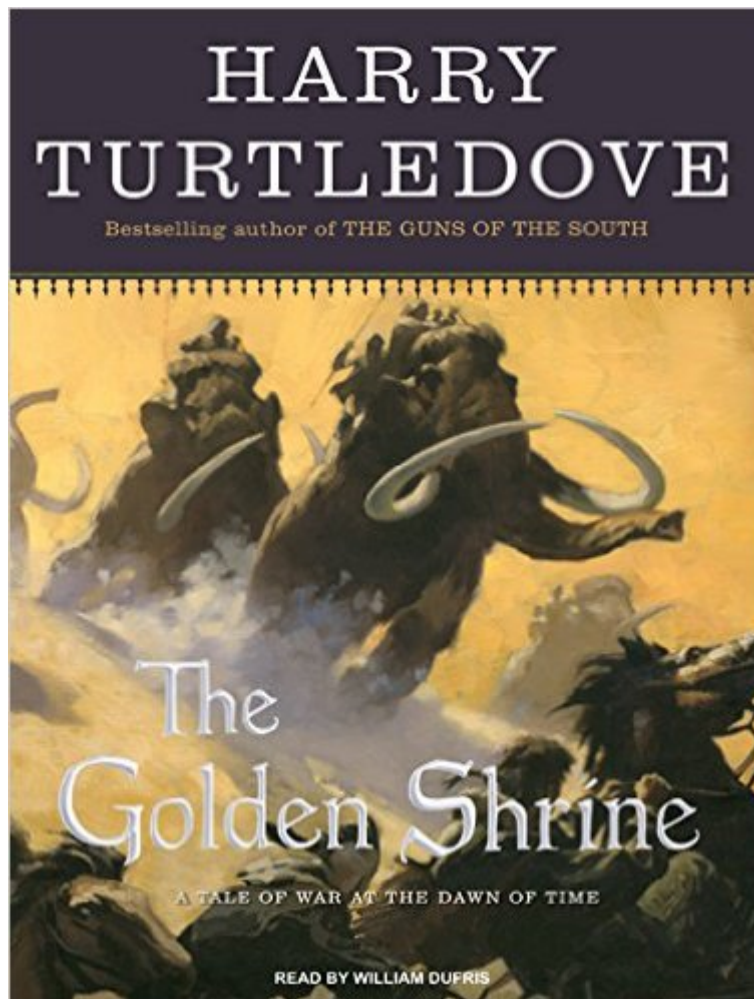


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The Golden Shrine: A Tale Of War At The Dawn Of Time (Opening Of The World)



Synopsis

The glaciers came and covered the world with ice. Now they are in retreat. North of the city of Nidaros, north of the forest, north of the steppes where the nomadic Bizogots hunt, a gap has opened in the ice-wall. And down through that gap come the men who call themselves "Rulers." Their terrifying cavalry rides wooly mammoths. Their bows can shoot arrows farther than those of the southerners. Their wizards wield power that neither the shamans of the Bizogots nor the wizards of Raumsdalian Empire can match-a magic that can melt the stone beneath a man's feet, call down blasting fire from the sky, or decimate a tribe with plagues that have no cure. Scattered survivors of the Bizogot tribes hide from the Rulers. The Empire is shattered. The feckless Emperor Sigvat II is in hiding. Against the Rulers stands Count Hamnet Thyssen and his small band of friends: Jarl Trasamund of the Three Tusk Bizogots; the adventurer Ulric Skakki; and, most important, Marcovefa, the female shaman of a cannibal tribe that lives atop the Glacier itself. Marcovefa has magic that the Rulers cannot counter. But there are many Rulers, and they have many wizards. Marcovefa is but one. Perhaps Hamnet and his allies can save their lands from the Rulers. But first they must seek out the legendary Golden Shrine-and the Golden Shrine has not been seen by human eyes since the time before the glaciers came.

Book Information

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Fantasy

Customer Reviews

I've not enjoyed every Turtledove novel I've ever read, but I'd never seen one that was so badly

written and falsely advertised that I felt I'd been conned out of the money I spent on it. The Grapple came closest, but I got that for free by winning a contest. (The one time I win a contest, and the prize is The Grapple.) But no, I'd never felt conned out of money by Turtledove. I can't say that anymore. The Grapple was bad in comparison with other TL-191 and Turtledove novels. The Golden Shrine, however, was so hackneyed that far, far worse authors, like David Hagberg or Robert Conroy, would be ashamed to put their name to it. And unlike The Grapple, TGS is the finale of the series, so the shadow of its failure falls heavily across its two prequels. The book pretty much chucks the established themes of the first two novels and reveals that the story has always been driven by a prophecy that everyone's forgotten to mention till now. Marcovefa appears to be the prophet, but the Rulers know the prophecy too, and it's why they keep sending assassins after Hamnet. (Which they'd been doing since before Marcovefa was introduced.) The prophecy is that Hamnet will prove to be the Rulers' most dangerous enemy. Details are added in, but they're wildly inconsistent, changing as the plot requires them to. I have to think Turtledove used them to foreshadow scenes he'd thought of but hadn't written yet. When he wrote them he realized they didn't work as he'd planned and changed things around, but didn't bother going back to fix the prophecies. This could all be explained as the characters having an imperfect understanding of the prophecy, but instead no one seems to notice it keeps changing. Probably because they too change as the plot requires them to.

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